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DENTATUS THE TYRANT.

It is many years ago—during which empires have been created, sovereigns expelled, republics overthrown, and the whole political face of Europe changed and changed again—since I was sentenced to the Torture; but I shall never forget it to my dying day. I am dumb now; I complain no more; the very cause of my complaint has been rooted out, but ah! at how tremendous a sacrifice! O tyrants, who make a desert, and call it peace, how pitiless are those right hands of yours!

I allude more especially to the dentists. What I ever did, or omitted to do, which first directed against me the zeal of that savage race, I do not know. It is only Constitutional Monarchs (Physicians, Surgeons, General Practitioners, and the like) who condescend to inquire into the charges against an offending member; Despots wrench it out, without inquiry, and with one turn of their wrists. I had been warned, it is true, for a considerable period that the thing would happen; but I had also been told that there was no escape. It was Predestination under its severest and most uncompromising aspect. 'That tooth,' observed Dentatus—upon my informing him, with an uncomfortable smile, that it felt very curious whenever I suddenly bit down upon it—'that tooth must come out,' so said he at least a quarter of a year before the catastrophe actually took place. A quarter of a year! Yes; three calendar months, and one of *them* only a February, to persons in easy circumstances, without dread or care for the future; but to me, who was living from hand to mouth (for I was for ever fingering the thing), and filled with dark forebodings for the future, three entire years, and all of them leap-years.

I took a morbid interest in perusing cases of lock-jaw induced by unskilful dentists. I snatched a fearful joy from hearing that it didn't hurt so much if you were previously frozen. Frozen! (I laughed a demon's laugh.) Once—only once, or I could not have survived it; Nature, I am confident, would have given way upon a second application—*once* a piece of ice-pudding touched that tooth. It was at a large party given by a serious aunt of mine, and at which none but the most serious people were present; but I was quite unable in such a moment of agony to pick and choose my expressions. No, no more ice, I thank you, in any shape for me!

Nor had I any great confidence in the electrical machine as a painless agent. Setting aside my terror on account of my tooth, I never could stand being electrified. When at school, there was an evening-party given to us by the head-master once

every term, to which we all went in our best clothes, with the air of being mere visiting acquaintances, and of having come great distances, although we all lived under one roof, and one of the attractions of this jubilee-night was an electric battery. For me, it had rather repulsion than attraction. I was afraid of it, and it hurt me. I did not like the being made to emit sparks as though I were a catherine-wheel. It was not becoming to me that my hair should stand up like corn in autumn; and it was a liberty in any man, no matter how scientific, to cause it to do so. Besides, however admirable this method of extraction might be, it was essential that the victim should keep fast hold of the wire. If he did not do this, all the electricity went, goodness knows where—into the fire-irons and window-bolts, I suppose—and his sufferings were greatly aggravated; for when a double-fanged upper grinder—a two-pair back—has to be torn up by the roots, and one expects not to be hurt at all, on account of certain precautions, if those precautions fail, the difference between the expectation and the reality is not to be expressed in words. Now, I had no sort of confidence in my being able to retain possession of the all-important wire.

Then, again, there was chloroform. That, for certain, was painless, and as some people aver, even pleasant. True. But I had also heard the same remark made in reference to death, and that was not the only connection between chloroform and that very disagreeable subject. I had read of people who could not be persuaded to wake again after that charming narcotic. Now, I was prepared to go almost any length to avoid the calamity which was impending, but not quite *that* length.

All the so-called 'painless methods' were thus therefore put out of the question. 'Ah,' observed my friend Funnidog, upon hearing of my resolve in this matter, 'I know your valour. I see you have a deal of determination; that is to say (and indeed I was blushing a little), determination of blood to the head. Being a man of taste, too, you would not be justified in employing an anæsthetic agent.' These heartless observations cost Funnidog my friendship. A man who could joke—make cold-blooded and laboured puns upon a fellow-creature in such a situation as mine—would shrink, I felt convinced, from no atrocity.

I put off the evil day as long as possible, but at last matters came to a crisis. When 'I could not eat but little meat,' and that had to be minced; when I examined every article of food before committing it to my mouth with the suspicion of a custom-house officer: when nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,

visited me only in snatches, and those embellished with dreams in which a red-hot skewer played always a prominent part—then I took courage, and wrote to the Tyrant, saying, 'Do thy worst,' and appointing the next day for the operation. Immediately that the letter was posted the pain left me. I dined off a neck of mutton—a thing abounding in gristle and nodosities—with perfect impunity, and began to think that I had been precipitate, and that the tooth was a very good tooth after all. A carraway seed in the cake at tea, however, was the humble but efficient instrument of recalling me to a sense of my situation, and I was in the tyrant's antechamber by 10.15 on the ensuing morning.

Early as it was, there were many there before me, for Dentatus was popular—that is to say, in the same sense as an epidemic is popular; people who could not help it patronising him in amazing numbers. These persons were all haggard and careworn to an extraordinary degree. Their hollow eyes turned anxiously towards the door whenever it opened to let in another victim, only to droop down again dejectedly over the pages of *Punch*. They had, some of them, waited so long that suspense had become in their eyes worse than the torture itself. Why do not dentists keep their words like other folks, and take your teeth out at the hour they have promised to do so? Why do they furnish their antechambers with such inappropriate literature? Who that is about to undergo a trial to which the Boot and the Thumbscrew were but bagatelles, wishes to read old volumes of *Punch*? Who selects a churchyard for the enjoyment of *Pickwick* or the *Caudle Lectures*? How much better, Dentatus, would it be to set before your miserable expectants volumes of an edifying and solemn character. Out of the *Book of Martyrs* a consolation might be extracted—I mean derived—from comparison; but why excite a ghastly merriment by jest-books? It is an insult to any man with a tooth in his head to say that it is done to make us forget our woe.

Forget! Oh, if to dream by night, and think on it by day,

If all the attention which the mind, the heart, the hand can pay—

if that be to forget it, then indeed it is forgot. Nobody turns over a single leaf of those comic miscellanies. Where the stolid gaze first falls, there doth it rest; only, as I have said, when the door opens, and the severe countenance of the menial ushers in another son or daughter of misery, does it look up for a moment—agonised—from the contemplation of the Dog Toby. Why, too, is it a male menial? a wretch concerning whom a fearful whisper floats about the room, that he sometimes holds the heads of refractory victims. Why not, O Dentatus! employ rather a lovely and benignant female for this duty? 'O woman,' says the poet, 'when pain and anguish wring the brow, a ministering angel thou!' And surely what is true of the brow, is at least equally true of the jaw. Keep, I say, your brutal myrmidon out of our sight, and let a beautiful maiden answer our palpitating summons—our almost inaudible knocks and rings. Let her lead our faltering steps through your cheerless corridors; let her take our umbrellas from our trembling hands; let her gentle accents murmur, as she adds us to the foredoomed flock: 'It will soon be over, sir.'

What a varied flock it is! Ancient rams, who, as one can see, have happily not many more such tortures to undergo, and all whose dental wants the rhinoceros will soon supply: venerable sheep, with wool on the top of their heads, in the place where the wool ought to grow, but does not: and merest little ones—inocent, but far from frolicsome—with whom the real trouble of Life has begun, alas, all too early. Mutton and lamb are dished up alike before the

Tyrant, with an equal portion of mint-sauce. Old and young, each clutch in one hand a sovereign and a shilling (lingering memento of an extinct coinage) with which to gratify, but not to satiate his maw. They will all return to him again and again, and he knows it, until death releases them from his bondage. When animals are herded together in one pen, they will—although they have not been previously introduced to one another—exchange compassionate looks, and bleats of piteous sympathy; but the Human, under similar circumstances, is mute and self-involved. Each one looks at the other as upon one who may precede him to the Tyrant's presence, and suspects him of having purchased that priority of the ill-favoured footman; for once in the antechamber, and our courage screwed up to the required pitch, we had all rather that the dreadful thing should be done quickly. All, that is, save one; a lamb of some fourteen years or so, who has been brought four hundred miles, he tells us, to be operated upon by Dentatus, but who doesn't think he can go through with it even now. His aunt is with him, who reproaches him for this backsliding, with, 'Don't be naughty, Frederic; now be a man—there's a dear.' In the midst of one of these exhortations the door opens, and the morose footman beckons to this wretched boy. 'Master Dubbleth, will you please to walk this way?' Master D. is not pleased—is very far from being so: there is delay, recalcitration, tears, asseverations that he is 'Quite well now, thank you, upon his honour,' and eventually something like physical violence. He is borne off, I say, to our intense horror, into the Tyrant's chamber, obviously against his wishes, and presently there arises a long howl of agony, which makes every cheek grow pale. Do we live in a free country, then, and yet can such scenes be enacted in a fashionable street? Is it possible, in case of any of us feeling disinclined to proceed with the matter in hand, that force—numerical superiority—will actually be employed? Shall we, too, be carried in—I distinctly saw the menial with one of the victim's legs under his arm—be carried into that fatal apartment? The howls subside, but there is hysterical sobbing, and we hear voices in the passage, and the shuffling of many feet.

'They have broken his jaw,' says one old gentleman in a sepulchral whisper, and I see him measure with a vacillating eye the depth of the drop from the window into the area.

Once again the door opens, and—I knew it when the handle turned, I knew it before the man's evil eye fell on me—it is my own turn now.

What a very small room! But then the walls, for only too obvious reasons, are constructed of an amazing thickness. What a flood of light is pouring in! 'The better to see with, my dear,' as the Wolf observed to Red Riding Hood upon a somewhat similar occasion. Dentatus is smiling blandly. What a beautiful set of teeth he wears. I wonder whether he does it for an advertisement, and whether he made them himself or not. He is wiping something sharp with a towel. I wonder what that is. I try to wonder, rather, for I know perfectly well. He remarks upon the present state of the weather, and the probable beauty of the afternoon. Afternoon indeed! What wretch would converse with a criminal upon the scaffold in early May upon the prospects of the approaching Derby? What had I to do with the afternoon? He hopes I shall find the chair comfortable. Yes, the chair is comfortable enough, doubtless, but as for the man that was in it, he had more fears than Dentatus wot of. Did I feel easy? Easy! Then I opened my mouth, and he put into it a little fairy looking-glass, and said: 'Ah, yes; I see: it will do capitally, with a little stopping.' 'Heaven bless you,' cried I, in a rapture; 'then it needn't come out, Dentatus, eh?' 'Only one need come out,' replied he. Only one! Then he—

It was a decent custom in the ancient Greek dramas not to shock the audience by the actual exhibition upon the stage of murders, mutilations, and stranglings; and while those sad proceedings were supposed to be taking place behind the scenes, the Chorus always used to drown the clamours of the victims, while at the same time acknowledging the justice of the sentence by crying, 'Ay, ay.' Shall I then, in the nineteenth century, shew myself more barbarous? No. They who have experienced my sufferings during those succeeding hours—mere seconds by the clock, however—will not need to be reminded of them; while those who have not, can never be brought to comprehend them by description. Suffice it to say that, when I recovered my senses, Dentatus was waving aloft a sort of miniature three-legged stool in ivory, which he professed to have extracted from my jaw. 'Are you sure that it is the right one?' inquired I, in faltering accents. And I was quite delighted to find that he was offended by the mere supposition of such a mistake. We parted the best of friends, and indeed I felt in love with the entire human family. When at the hall-door, I again encountered Master Dubbittuth and his aunt stepping into a carriage, my heart quite yearned towards him.

'I congratulate you,' said I, 'though I fear you must have suffered almost as much as I'—for I was sure my own case was quite unparalleled.

The young gentleman looked a little sheepish, as his aunt replied: 'Oh, the naughty boy would not let Mr Dentatus touch him. He felt so faint and hysterical, he said, poor dear, and so we are going back again.'

And he actually did return those four hundred miles with as many teeth as he brought with him. What a silly young fellow he was, say you, to be so afraid about such a little matter. Just wait till your turn comes, however. I only know that if I could have told beforehand what was going to happen to me when I went to Dentatus, I'd— But I forbear. You will know all about it yourself, sooner or later. I dare say you have one or two of those little black specks inside your grinders which are the heralds of this sort of catastrophe. You have none! Then I sincerely pity you, for the disease must have flown to the roots, and that is the worst of all cases. It produces what is truly called the 'incurable toothache'—incurable, that is, without the intervention of Dentatus.

THE MILITARY FRONTIER.

WHEN a breathless messenger carried to Prince Metternich the tidings of the revolution of July, the veteran diplomatist rapped his jewelled snuff-box with all the grace of the old school, and calmly remarked: 'L'Europe ne veut plus de ses anciens cochers.' And yet, the epigram once spoken and duly applauded, its wily author bent his whole energy to bringing back the skittish team of nationalities to the sober jogtrot of official routine; and not unsuccessfully. Even the earthquake of 1848 failed to shatter the fabric of that Austrian empire which it shook so fearfully. The heterogeneous mass of jarring races and jealous creeds remains to this day still blended in unwilling union, and in spite of bankruptcy and misgovernment, Caesar can yet point with pride to his legions and his provinces.

Of all the countries beneath the sceptre of his majesty the imperial, royal, and apostolic, the two whose blind loyalty to the House of Hapsburg was most thoroughly relied upon, were the Tyrol and the Military Frontier. Schwarzenberg and Metternich had felt the pulse of each dependency

of the Kaiser's, and knew but too well the dangerous love of freedom that smouldered in every Hungarian heart; how Italy loathed the stranger, and Bohemia cherished visions of independence, while even Vienna had a maudlin sentiment in favour of liberty. But the paternal despots knew also that the Tyrolean's rifle was ready to be levelled at the breast of any insurgent reformer, while the Military Frontier offered a multitude of hardy soldiers to repress the national spirit of Hungary. Thus matters stood twelve years ago; but bad government has alienated even the fierce bandogs of the Kaiser: the Tyrolean has left off telling his beads, to read newspapers, and murmur against rulers who insist on managing the men and things of the nineteenth century according to the maxims of the dark ages; and even the rugged frontiersman is lending his voice to swell the indignant protest of wronged and trampled Hungary, and has begun to talk of franchise and suffrage, of parliaments and the ballot-box, in a manner which strikes dismay into the prim bureaucrats of the imperial Chancery.

Of all the provinces united in what the purists of Vienna still love grandiloquently to describe as the Holy Roman Empire, the Military Frontier is the most anomalous and peculiar. Europe contains no similar instance of a country without an aristocracy, without commerce or manufactures, where the state of siege is chronic, and martial law the normal condition of affairs. The Military Frontier is an enormously long but narrow slip of territory, measuring a thousand miles from end to end, and stretching along the Turkish frontiers of Austria, from Pölvö, on the Adriatic Sea, to the most northerly pass of the Carpathians. It is divided into four portions, of which the extreme westerly and easterly sections are by far the most important and interesting—the first of these being the Croatian; the second, the Transylvanian Frontier. The Slavonian Frontier and the Hungarian Banat, in the middle of the semicircular sweep, are less noteworthy than those first named. But these four portions, under their respective generals, form one prodigious camp: the whole Military Frontier is a vast and warlike Utopia, where every citizen is a soldier, where Rittmeisters answer to nobles, and all the litigation is carried on before the convenient tribunal of a drum-head court-martial. When the Turks were driven back from Hungary in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they left a desert behind them, studded here and there by ruined towns, roofless castles, and towers ingeniously constructed of Christian skulls. To this ruthless devastation we owe the Military Frontier, designed by the emperors of Austria as a barrier against the inroads of the Moslem, and the entrance of the plague. Quarantine and garrison to civilised Europe have those hardy borderers been for hundreds of years, and they have done their work manfully. An Argus eye has been kept on the barbarian outposts of the oriental world, and not in vain. Many a baffled army has been forced to retire with loss and disgrace from the limits of Christendom, many a fell pestilence has been nipped in the bud through the agency of this strange institution, which for centuries has kept watch and ward for our behoof, with scanty thanks and for a meagre recompense.

But now that the work is over, and the need no longer exists, the warrior race of colonists are setting up their claim to share the usual lot of mankind. The danger is past and gone; Turkey no longer has will or power to invade anybody. The horse-tails are laid by in dust and mildew, the Prophet's scimitar is blunt and edgeless, and the great Blood-drinker, as his courtiers still call Abdul Medjid, prefers champagne to the traditional beverage of his ancestors. The plague has faded away, as well as the old Ottoman pugnacity, for, for thirty years, there has not been a case at Constantinople. Roum and Anadol, Syria and Egypt, know

the scourge only by report, and Tripoli alone cherishes the enfeebled pest in her brown plains; and yet the old precautions are kept up along Christendom's southern fringe, sternly as when the destroying angel hovered every few years over the whole of the orient world, shaking down poisonous dew from his black pinions. Forty days of quarantine await any luckless voyager who may cross the border of the sultan's territories, and the cordon of villages allotted for the performance of the probationary period would make a sanitarian shudder. As for passing the line unobserved, it would require a ball-proof man to do that. Night and day, the triple posts are linked together by an ingenious complication of patrols, pickets, and sentries, and it is about as safe to traverse the district without an escort as to thrust one's hand into a hornet's nest. Five-and-forty thousand of the peasants are under arms at a time, according to their rotation of duty, duly enregimented, and doing feudal service for their lands. The soil belongs to the crown, and is divided into fiefs of small extent, held upon the purely feudal plan by a class of sturdy yeomen, who pay rent only with the musket and bayonet. Seventeen regiments of infantry—an Austrian regiment is numerically equal to an English brigade—a naval force, and a regiment of hussars, are maintained by the borderers, and for border duty. The soldier—if we except the hussar—gets no pay, and even finds himself in powder and pipeclay, just as the ancient militia of England did in the Arcadian epoch, when standing armies were unknown. The officers, however, receive such pay as the imperial, royal, and apostolic treasury can afford, and are often more indebted for subsistence to their rations than their nominal salary in paper florins; indeed, I have known a major to place his chief dependence upon hay, receiving, as he did, forage for seventeen horses. The officers have no sinecure, however, for the patrols and rounds are kept up, however needlessly, with as jealous a vigilance as if the seraskier, with a hundred thousand Turks under the crimson standard, were marching towards Vienna. The soldier does his work well and cheaply, and providing his own cartridges, he learns to be thrifty of saltpetre and lead, and seldom fires till he is sure of hitting. He knows every inch of the country; he is trained from childhood to face storm and snow, the blinding showers of winter, when the gale hurls the white flakes like thistledown over the trackless steppe; the dark night, when the long-drawn howl tells that the wolves are growing fierce with famine.

The Western Frontier is much harassed by wolves; the Bosnian forests are full of them, and in midwinter they cross the border in droves, desperate with hunger. Many a wild tale have the dwellers in frontier farms to relate of houses beleaguered through the long hours of darkness by the gray prowlers, of folds sealed by the yelling horde, of truant children whose bones were found at the edge of the wood, relics of the frightful feast. Now and then, a sentinel perishes in this miserable manner, and it is frequently necessary to keep up great fires in the more exposed situations, and to double the guards against the four-footed enemy. A few years ago, a singular escape took place. A lonely sentry, surprised by the wolves, took refuge in a tree, and had the forethought to tie himself to a bough, lest he should become exhausted before his persecutors left the spot. It was a bitter night of frost and wind, with a clear starry sky, and for hours he remained on his perch, shivering in the icy gale, and looking down at the drove below, that howled and sniffed hungrily about, or reared themselves against the trunk of the tree, pawing and scratching like dogs. They stayed till morning; and when the sergeant arrived with the relief, the sentry was found a paralysed cripple, from the effects of cold and cramp.

But it must not be supposed that wolves and hard weather are the only foes of the border soldier,

especially in the west. The Croatian border is just what the Scottish border must have been in the days of William of Deloraine. We have amongst us so many who cherish a theoretical affection for the good old times, that it must be a kindness to indicate a nook of earth, not more than two or three hundred miles beyond the sound of a railway whistle, where the good old times may be witnessed in full and practical operation. The Croatian frontier is that nook, a spot compared with which the Spanish sierras are barren of adventure, and the Abruzzi commonplace and conventional. Austria has barred out progress from the Military Frontier, and the people practise the simple virtues of their ancestors. When the peasant has gone through his turn of martial duty, he lays aside his uniform, dons his red or blue cap, his embroidered jacket, Illyrian sandals, and queer barbaric finery, and comes forth a cattle-lifter. Difficult is it, when gazing on the wild groups who frequent the markets of Agram or Caristadt, with long Turkish pistols stuck ostentatiously in their gaudy sashes, and long hair streaming over their white mantles, to realise that one is still in Austria. Nor are the petronels and daggers for purposes of absolute ornament; both sides of the border are peopled by the same half-tamed race, the Turkish Croats being perhaps a shade the wilder of the tribes; but the habits of the opposite neighbours are identical. Yanos of Austria selects a moonshiny night for a pleasant little excursion over the border, dashes into Turkey with a party of armed horsemen, and returns with a drove of 'annexed' cows, having perhaps paid off some trifling grudge against Yanos of Bosnia, by burning his house over his head. Yanos of Bosnia, nobly contemptuous of any law but the *lex talionis*, gathers a select circle of his Moslem and Christian friends, gallantly armed and mounted, and harries the barns and cattle-pens of his namesake on the Kaiser's soil, not improbably cutting a throat or two in the course of his retaliation, and perhaps carrying off Miss Yanos to the land of the cypress and myrtle, a 'romance of the harem' which brings down Nemesis in the shape of an Austrian colonel. Austria has a special treaty with the Sublime Porte, by virtue of which she is entitled to march troops over the border into the Bosnian pachaliks, to burn, slay, sink, and destroy, as seems good to her, without any interruption of the usual amenities of diplomatic intercourse between the two powers. Thus, the good understanding is kept up; the envoy of Austria and the viziers of the sultan smoke the pipe of peace together, and exchange compliments and sugar-plums, and all the while perhaps a brigade of the Kaiserliks are marching in long array through the Bosnian maize-fields, and a Turkish village is in flames.

But it must be owned that the Turco-Croats are troublesome neighbours, and need an armed police to repress and chastise their outrages, although scarcely such a force as exists. Besides the borderers, a certain amount of regulars garrison the frontiers, and the Kaiser's officers sigh when their turn comes for banishment into that savage region, destitute of theatres and ball-rooms. But to an observant mind, there is something of deep interest in the extraordinary jumble of races, tongues, costumes, and characters displayed in this outpost of Christendom. There are Slavonians and Magyars, Illyrians and Servians, gipsies and Bosniaks, the wealthy, soft-spoken Armenian, who seems to be a commercial Midas, and who turns all he touches into gold; and the half-heathen herdsman, who esteems the dexterous theft of a sheep or a calf above all other accomplishments. There is the Jew, pliant and courteous as a teacher of deportment, and speaking dialects enough to entitle him anywhere to a professorial chair. There are Wallachians calling themselves Romans, conversing in Latin nearly as good as that of Terence or Juvenal, and boasting their descent from the

conquerors of the world. There is the moody, hot-tempered Hungarian, the Bayard or Hamlet of what platform orators love to describe as the 'nationalities'; and the chivalrous Szekler, a hussar from his cradle, and who boasts himself more Hunnish than the so-called Huns themselves. There is the Slovak, with his ear for music, and his turn for agriculture; the Saxon colonist, or possibly the immigrant from Bohemia, growing rich by patient industry and instinctive thrift; and beside him is the bright-eyed Croat, who can ride and drive, herd cattle, steal cattle, rob and fight, and no more. There ends the list of Croatian attributes; and yet a traveller cannot but feel that he is among a quick-witted people, far swifter to catch a hint or comprehend a remark than the Germans in general, and of fine physical powers and great vivacity. The Croats have never had fair play. Austrian rule has blighted their prospects of keeping step in the grand march of the world. They have been kept to be the Kaiser's Cossacks, terrible to his foes from the very savageness of their habits, and from the evil lessons of their Turkish neighbours. Hence it is that a war in which the Croats figure furnishes such ugly paragraphs to the journals, and such grisly pictures of massacre and burning to the *Illustrated London News*. They are of old Slavonic stock, and in bygone days had a kral of their own, and a realm for him to reign over. But the king of Croatia, like his brother monarch of Bosnia, was but an ephemeral potentate, toppled over, or set once more on his unstable throne, exactly as Hungary and the Lower Empire, and the power of Caesars and of sultans, contracted or expanded. And at last, the Turk swallowed all. Such part of Croatia as now belongs to Austria, land won back, inch by inch, from the shadow of the crescent, and bought with a great price in blood, is preserved distinct from Hungary, under the semi-feudal rule of a ban, who answers more accurately to the position which the Earls of Mercia held under Ethelred and Edward, than to any more modern example.

The serpent policy of Austria has always been to weaken Hungary by keeping Croatia and Carinthia, Illyria and Dalmatia, and Transylvania and Bukovina separate from the ancient constitutional kingdom of the Magyars. Hungary, which to-day demands that these unduly severed branches should be grafted again upon the parent stem, claims the Military Frontier also, and is answered by the imperial Chancery with a blunt refusal. The borderers, say the sages of Vienna, are not freemen, but predestined from the cradle to a career of pipeclay and the goose-step: they are soldiers, not citizens, and cannot therefore vote for a deputy or debate on politics. They must continue, as before, to be of the opinion which their commanding officers are graciously pleased to entertain. There is something ludicrous, were it not painful, in the notion that the second half of the nineteenth century should have dawned upon a European race formally denied the exercise of discretion on any topic, and whose duty is held by themselves and their rulers to consist in childlike obedience. Of course, even with us, the Articles of War and the Mutiny Act must ride roughshod over Magna Charta. It would be intolerable that a corporal should argue the point with his colonel, or a coxswain confute his commander by the aid of syllogisms; but imagine a whole nation of soldiers, devoted from infancy to drill and discipline, taught in the earliest youth to reverence a cocked-hat and to adore a sword-knot, and never presuming to differ in judgment from a regimental superior!

The rewards of this anomalous people are almost equally peculiar. It has been mentioned that the peasants hold their lands of the crown, by martial tenure. But with this primitive feudalism is interwoven the patriarchal system, producing the oddest effect. The sief is supposed to belong to the oldest

male member of a family, who is called the *goszpodar*. Around this family chief cluster sons and grandsons, brothers and sisters, nephews and cousins, until a perfect clan is collected under a single roof. Three or four generations dwell in the same house, and dine at the same table, a little commonwealth that may amount to a mere dozen of individuals, but which often exceeds eighty. The patriarch, or *goszpodar*, is prince and president; and his spouse, the *goszpodarica*, rules with awful sway over kitchen and storeroom, and exercises authority over the feminine republic. A double portion of the produce is allotted to the august pair, and the rest is equally divided, though land and cattle are the inalienable property of the household, and cannot be possessed by any one person. The *goszpodar* is a governor, but a governor in council; the men of the family have a vote when any grand constitutional question raises a stir in the little domestic parliament. Money, or clothes, or furniture, are individual belongings, and no drones are suffered in the hive. At first sight, a very charming tableau of primeval manners and antique simplicity is here presented. An artist—say Richard Tinto, Esq., A.R.A.—could make a delightful picture of the family group: the playful children, the kerchiefed matrons and maidens, with raven hair elaborately plaited with ribbons and silver coins, in Greek fashion; the bronzed husbandmen; the blooming striplings; and for apex of the human pyramid, the white-haired old patriarch, reigning blandly over a smiling assemblage of the loyal and the loving. But perhaps sometimes the real may fall short of the ideal, and disappoint us cruelly. The benevolent grandsire may be a close-fisted capitalist, economising on the family meals, and swelling his private hoard by judicious cheese-parings; or he may be a choleric, violent old fellow, bullying the weak, squabbling with the strong, and keeping the family in perpetual hot water. Again, he may be, and often is, a drivelling dotard, a mere *roi fainéant*, with his sceptre 'in commission,' and the mayor of the palace may turn out a very King Stork on the hands of the luckless tribe. Then, how very possible is it that Mater-familias, Madame the *Goszpodarica*, or she-patriarch, should happen to be a shrew, with a sharp temper and a shrill tongue, never quiet, never ceasing to rate and scold, among her score of kindred handmaids. The very idea of family jars by wholesale, and the squabbles of relatives in so extensive a theatre, has something distressing to a philanthropist; and it is to be feared that many a stalled ox, with its traditional seasoning, is served up at those Homeric banquets in a crowded Croatian farm.

Then the Frontiersman, poor fellow, is doubly a vassal; he wears the twin yoke of the clan and of the Kaiser.

The adventurous boy, who asks his little share,
And hies from home with many a gossip's prayer,

is by no means a popular personage on the Military Frontier. If any 'adventurous boy' does 'ask his little share,' he is by no means certain to get it, unless he be a very vexatious scamp indeed, fit to leave the Frontier for the Frontier's good. If he takes that kind of permission which is proverbially attributed to our French neighbours, he is deemed a deserter from hearth and guardroom, from his grandfather and his captain, and is hunted down by the Eumenides of the family and the battalion. If he formally solicits, from his military and social superiors, leave to carry his thews and sinews, his brain and muscle, to some other market of the world, he is very likely to be snubbed and browbeaten. Suppose he perseveres—that the colonel gives a grudging consent, and the *goszpodar* echoes it in a similar spirit—still the poor fellow has to run the gantlet of the black looks, the reproaches, and the wrath of his swarming relatives. He goes, and no old shoe is flung after

him for luck, no good advice and kindly predictions of future greatness cheer the young aspirant; and if he is followed by any 'gossip's prayer,' it is probably that, when he meets his deserts, he may find a gallows sufficiently remote not to reflect disgrace upon his affectionate kinsfolk. Even if a youth or maid venture to wed a member of some other family, this act of independence is treated as a sort of petty treason. The offender has a smaller portion from the common stock than if he or she had mated within the pale of consanguinity, the gospodar is sulky, and the queen-bee querulous; while each cousin considers himself or herself to have been most shabbily treated, and determines to give the intrusive foreigner no cordial reception to the hive. The consequence of this is, that relationships ramify and blend to a degree that would offer a tough knot for the ingenuity of Doctor's Commons. Most of the people are Greeks, of the old, non-united communion. In every village you see the domes of their churches flashing back the sunlight from the garish green and gold, the burnished copper and gaudy paint, so dear to the Christians of the east. There are plenty of Catholics, too, and of Protestants. The latter are subdivided into Calvinists and Lutherans. All over Hungary and its borders, the former are numerous, and in those lands, at least, the followers of Calvin and the faithful of Rome live in mutual toleration and brotherly accord. But directly you find a Lutheran colony, you are surprised by the jarring and sparring, the polemical skirmishes and wordy battles so familiar to us nearer home. Curiously enough, the Lutherans squabble as fiercely with Calvinists as with Romanists. The Greeks predominate, however, on the Military Frontier; and some of their priests have studied and fasted at Mount Athos, or other of those huge monasteries which still pour forth their hosts of fierce-eyed preachers, pale-cheeked and shaven as to the temples, over the whole Levant. The Frontier really is the boundary between the east and the west, a truer border than the Bosphorus affords. For all practical purposes, Asia begins on the Bosnian line, three days' journey from Vienna; indeed, you cannot bring a Turk to own that Turkey is in Europe at all; he waves aside your maps, and pooh-poohs your globes and charts with a sublime fatuity. Where the muezzin chants, and the minaret rises, where the sultan reigns, even with vicarious sway, as in Wallachia, the Moslem believes himself beyond the pale of infidel Europe. Even the Military Frontier is semi-oriental. I have seen the true eastern salaam performed there with genuine eastern grace; and though the borderers are enthusiasts for their creed, not a few of the children may be seen in the dress of Asiatics, while the customs of the country bear little analogy to anything in Western Europe. After growing accustomed to scarlet caps and embroidered jackets, to sashes and sandals, and the startling spectacle of an armed population, it is impossible but to be struck by the reflection—'How rich everybody is!' North Croatia is a land of rags and poverty, of sterile mountains, wretched hovels, and a Tipperary of beggars. But the Frontier, especially the Banat and Slavonia, contains a peasantry abounding in creature comforts. The men, warmly clad in blue and white woollen, with shaggy mantles and leathern greaves, wearing broad-leaved hats stuck full of flowers and ostrich or peacock feathers, look like magnificoes when compared with the bloused peasantry of France and Belgium; and the women have ornaments enough to set up a French village. Then everybody drives his own wagon and horses, and generally at a rattling gallop, in the wild whip-cracking Hungarian style; and everybody has cattle and buffaloes, and sheep, and poultry, and swine, and all sorts of roots and grain, and meadows whereon to graze all the cavalry of Scythia. Everybody's house, too, seems snug and in good repair, standing in its blooming garden, or

ranged in one of the enormously broad streets of the villages, with a double row of leafy linden-trees before the door, water murmuring past, bees humming among the blooming flowers.

I never saw on the Frontier the squalid poverty, the tatters, the hunger, the crushing misery, too frequent in lands of higher pretensions. Part of this comparative wealth is due to the fertility of the soil—a soil which repays tillage right bountifully—and part, no doubt, to that very patriarchal system of which I have complained. The 'house communion' dwarfs the intellect to develop the muscles; ideas are cramped by it, and education blighted, but the little republic takes care of its own helpless ones, and screws the full meed of work out of those capable of exertion. Law and opinion forbid idling, even to a genius or a misanthrope. No one may shirk his duties, when so many have a vested right in his industry. Skulking and 'malingering' are hopeless tactics in the publicity of the household, and under the scrutiny of so many jealous eyes, the most incurable dawdler that ever sent in an *aprotat* at college would be compelled to work in a Frontier family. No poor-law is needed; the gospodar is a substitute for relieving officers and boards of guardians. There is not a mendicant to be seen, unless it be a gipsy from Hungary. Everybody looks fat, merry, contented, and warmly clad. But this is the very thing noted in countries tilled by slave-labour, and which induces enthusiastic southerners to contrast the plump negro of Virginia with the gaunt weaver of Spitalfields. Most countries have had the choice between liberty and well-fed servitude. We in Britain made our election long since between a free life and vegetable torpidity; and after many a year of compulsory work and a full meal, the Slavonian of the Frontier is beginning to discover that man is something higher than a machine, and that it is better to be a needy freeman than a pampered slave. There is some trade in the country, limited to the exchange of its raw materials for goods from the world of mills, and looms, and forges. The paper-currency of the empire serves as a circulating medium; and it is marvellous to see the gravity with which a buyer will produce his portfolio full of greasy bank-paper, wretched little florin-notes, and segments of the same, and promises of some Austrian Abraham Newland to pay twenty kreuzers, or sevenpence farthing, on demand, and so forth. Silver is regarded with a superstitious reverence, so rare is it, and eke so beloved. The gift of a silver florin is to a Frontiersman what a string of beads is to a savage. How he hugs it, and gazes at it, and breathes on it, and rubs it bright with the skirt of his blue coat, and bears off the precious thing to add to his hoard in some recon-dite stocking! But gold, the yellow metal that is so potent an enchanter elsewhere, is on this frontier of heathenness utterly misconstrued, vilified, despised. Austria has kept gold out of the empire, until the people have ceased to believe in it. Even in Vienna, it is sometimes grudgingly taken, with dark looks and evident aversion. On the Frontier, it is not seldom flatly refused as a means of payment, and pushed aside in scorn. It is worth a journey to Jasenovacz to witness a phenomenon so refreshing and novel as that of gold being treated to the cold shoulder. Yet, though nobody is poor, Dives does not exist in his pomp and luxury; there are no gentry, no nobles, except in the Banat. The Banat is rich indeed, with a soil that bears crops the most prodigious, in return for sorry agriculture, and whose pastures fatten those huge herds of cattle which feed half Austria. But the Banat is woefully unhealthy; malaria and marsh-fever make it nearly as empty, every wet year, as the Campagna of Rome itself. But the matchless black soil, six feet in depth, is too profitable to be deserted; colonists are coaxed to barter health for wealth, and estates have been sold to rich Armenian cattle-

dealers, who have been further gratified by patents of nobility and the rank of count.

There is a good deal of smuggling, of salt and tobacco chiefly, along the border-line, but the patrols exercise scrupulous vigilance. The worst of the matter is, that quarantine rules complicate the revenue regulations. Thus, when a Wallachian shepherd is surprised in carrying a huge lump of green rock-salt across the Austrian line, he is careful to fling it down, with a rag or two beside it, and to flee for his life. He is safe when once out of gunshot, but the unlucky guards are saddled with an awful responsibility. They must not pick up that piece of salt; they may not abandon it; they are bound to go through formalities unnumbered about it. Night and day, a sentry watches the salt and the rags, and lets no one come near them. Probably the smuggler abandoned his property high up on the bleak Carpathian Mountains—never mind that! Cold or hot, in storm or shine, watch and ward must be kept on that fatal importation; in fact, the salt has to perform quarantine. Meanwhile, subalterns report to captains, majors to colonels, stamped papers fly over the country like hail, the general signs, the doctors countersign; there are memorials and orders issued, all about half-a-crown's worth of salt. At last, the health-officers go up the mountain, kindle a fire, fumigate rags and salt, solemnly grasp the rags with a pair of tongs, as St Dunstan handled the nose of Apollyon, and burn them in the fire. Then, after the salt has been sprinkled, smoked, and disinfected, out come pen and ink and stamped papers, and a regular *procès-verbal* is drawn up, and then, amid great rejoicings, the salt is pronounced to be free from plague, and 'compromised' salt no longer, but fit for human solace and refection. So it is confiscated for the emolument of the imperial, royal, apostolic treasury. And all this when there is no plague nearer than Tripoli, in Africa!

The Transylvanian Frontier boasts of the superb Szekler hussars, considered by Austrian critics the finest light horse in Europe. They are a local corps, born to wear dolman and kalpac. One very remarkable body of soldiers pervades the entire thousand miles of border; these are the Serreshans, a troop of scouts, armed, dressed, and accoutred in Turkish, or rather in Turco-Greek style. They wear the oriental garb, carry ornamented yataghans, and the long Turkish pistol, and are distributed in small numbers along the line. They act as guides to the ordinary troops; and as they are all smart and daring fellows, and perfectly aware of everything that is said and done in the neighbouring Turkish provinces, they are invaluable as a sort of human sleuth-hounds. The courage and adroitness of these men are most remarkable: trained from youth to espial upon a foe so cruel and vindictive as the Turk, their powers of observation equal those of a Red Indian; they bear all fatigues and privations cheerfully, face all perils, and pass their lives gaily amid thrilling incidents which would insure the success of a railway novel. Unfortunately, these desperadoes have not improved in morals from contact with barbarians; they are pitiless as their foes, and they share in one very horrible superstition common in the border provinces of Turkey; this is, that he who eats the heart of a young child will be rendered invulnerable, or at least ball-proof. There is said to be more than one Serreshan still alive who has resorted to so shocking a talisman as this. Most of the Serreshans are employed on the western or wildest frontier. But there are many on the Transylvanian border, too, where bloodshed and rapine are not uncommon, although the Bosnians are far fiercer than the Wallachian shepherd-robbers. The central parts of the Frontier, protected by the Danube and a line of guard-horses, are but little molested; and no doubt half-a-dozen regiments of mounted police would replace effectually the whole force of the feudal militia. Transylvania,

within the Military Frontier, possesses a watering-place, with baths and healing waters, where a major of hussars presides over the hygeian fountains, and ordinances for the government of the Brunnen are published by beat of drum. One of these is curious: it is requested that any visitor having a calf, pig, or sheep to kill, will not slaughter it on the promenade or Grand Parade, a commodious block having been provided for the accommodation of those who seek pleasure or health at the Carpathian spa.

THE MARRIED BACHELOR.

BRIGHT BELLINGHAM—by the by, he was no relation to the man who shot Perceval—had a capital business when steel engravings were respectably paid for, and an annual was thought the most indispensable part of the Christmas cheer in genteel houses. His plates were the glory of the *New Year's Garland*, the *Christmas Rose*, and half a score whose names I have forgotten. He was the chosen artist of fashionable Magazines, Court Albums, and Caskets of Beauty, which then abounded. Bright's income was consequently large, but unfortunately his outlay was larger. Mrs Bellingham was no manager; moreover, she liked style and fashion; and Bright's wedded happiness had been rather amply crowned with nine daughters, to be finished, dressed, brought out, and got off, if possible. They lived in Bryanston Square, gave splendid parties, went to Ramsgate every summer, and to Brighton every winter; went up the Rhine, and down the Mediterranean; always hired a carriage for the season, and kept Bright bare and busy. In spite of his returns from the *Garlands* and the *Caskets*, Bright's Christmas bills were not always paid when the next came in; but the honest man did his best to make ends meet. He worked hard, and staved off creditors, took in pupils, of whom I was one; whereby I got acquainted with the family.

Bright was a small genteel man, quietly vain of himself and all that was his, the easiest flattered soul I ever knew, and generally good-humoured when accounts were not troublesome. Mrs Bright was a large showy woman, made for the exhibition of dress and millinery. Nobody could set off gowns and bonnets to better advantage; and she lived in the persuasion that getting the newest fashions, and bringing out her girls, comprehended the whole duty of woman. There were five of the Misses Bellingham out when I had the honour of their acquaintance. They were all pretty, and regularly varied as to fair and dark, the one always coming next to the other. Of course, they all played and sang, dressed and danced, thoroughly understood the wheedling of papa when anything new was wanted; and every one expected to captivate a lord. There was some controversy regarding the charms of the Misses Bellingham in our studio: one voted for Florence, another for Charlotte, and a third for Clara, as the queen of beauty among her sisters. My convictions were in favour of the youngest, Miss Julia Jane—a curious combination of names, formed, I believe, by her father's anxiety to name one daughter—she was hoped to be the last—after a kind old aunt who had brought him up, and by Mrs Bright's determination to have no vulgar names in her family. It was said she had taken strong measures to have the Jane dropped; but Bright remained faithful to his aunt's memory, and the young lady latterly preferred her vulgar name, because somebody—I charitably believe it was my cousin Hawkins—put it in her head that she bore a striking resemblance to the portraits of Lady Jane Grey. If so, the luckless lady who lost her head by coming too near the crown, must have been lovely as well as learned, for Miss Julia Jane, when I first saw her, early in her seventeenth year, was as pretty a brunette as could be found in London; and though the smallest of the brought-out sisters,

she was a good deal the liveliest, and the cleverest, too, in the opinion of us young men. I believe the four seniors snubbed her in a gentle, sisterly way; Miss Julia Jane didn't mind that. In the persuasion of her likeness to the ten days' queen, she took to studying Greek—I can't say with what success—condemned novels, read only the old poets, pronounced dancing frivolous, and, when she could recollect her great character, looked uncommonly grave and sober.

Hawkins always insisted that a figure prefixed to a story in the *Casket* called the Queen's Revenge, and considered one of the highest efforts of Bright's genius, had been designed from her. We all thought Hawkins had authority in such matters; he was Bright's most promising pupil; and the little man, when he was in good-humour, used to prophesy a future of plates and vignettes for him sufficient to stir up our envy. Hawkins had personal advantages also: he was the handsomest and most dashing young fellow among us; it was our standing wonder where he got the money to dress so well, for Hawkins was an artist's son. His father had left him nothing but a mother and two sisters to do the best he could for; a couple of uncles in the city, who had never got on in business; and a rising reputation, cut down by the scythe of death. Mr Bellingham received, according to advertisement, only a limited number of pupils. What the limits were, I never knew; but his terms were high, and Bright was so particular about antecedents and connections, that some people thought he had an eye to chances for his girls. Our number consisted of Cousin Henry Hawkins, the promising artist; myself, who have since taken to business, and turned out a respectable city-man; young Serle, who was engraving mad then—he had been studying for the bar before, and afterwards became an M.D.; and lastly, Carl Werner, the German, from whom nobody expected anything but awkwardness.

Werner's family had come from Hamburg, and settled in London about the time when the French occupation did such ill service to their city. They were all merchants in the Baltic trade; but Carl, like a true German, found out that the counting-house did not agree with his inner life, and took to engraving out of his moral consciousness. It was Mr Bellingham's decided opinion that Werner never would be an artist. He paid the fees, however, went out and came in as quietly as the cat, worked away in a corner of the studio, from hour to hour, without looking up, while we three talked nonsense, discussed our acquaintances, or tried the boxing-gloves in the absence of our master. Being young men of genteel connections, and more or less eligibility, we had the honour of assisting at most of Mrs Bright's parties. Even Werner was admitted to the select circle. She had made it out that his father had a paying business, and Carl was the only son; but in our designs on the hearts of the Misses Bellingham, none of us stood in dread of Werner. He was tall, loose hung, large featured, gaunt, and stooping. For upsetting things, stepping on ladies' dresses, breaking glass or china, and putting the wrong word in the wrong place, I never knew his equal. Not that Werner was intentionally rough or careless; the damage he did troubled him more than anybody else; but by nature he was awkward in hand and foot, looks and tongue, and, to crown his charms, he had a slow, drawing manner of speaking, and a slight deficiency in the organ of hearing. The girls called him poor Werner. Mr Bellingham said he would never get beyond wood-cuts; but Mrs Bright, especially after she had made out about his father, maintained that Carl Werner was a sensible young man; and I think she had designs upon him for the eldest daughter, Miss Florence, who had been out seven years, and had three broken-off engagements. Strange to say, notwithstanding his awkwardness, and our

common belief that Werner was a nobody, Carl Werner was sensible. In all matters that required more than common judgment, in all difficult cases, scrapes, and misunderstandings, whenever judicious advice was wanted, and ways could not be seen clear, even the promising Hawkins consulted Carl without restraint and without reserve; for, besides being the best-natured fellow in the world, he had such sound honour and honesty, that no interest could prevent him from speaking exactly as he thought, and no bond was requisite to bind him to secrecy.

I learned to value him for those qualities after he made up a quarrel, which threatened to be serious, between Cousin Hawkins and me. If the truth must be told, it originated in a picnic at Hornsey Wood, and a flower that fell out of Miss Julia Jane's bonnet. Well, most men play the fool in like fashion some time in their lives. I had been thinking myself an ill-used man, and also of avenging my wrongs by shooting Henry; but having taken the precaution to consult Werner—I don't remember his arguments, for it is five-and-twenty years ago—he succeeded in convincing me that my cousin was not to blame; that girls would change their minds; that perhaps I had mistaken my position, and that it was beneath a man to quarrel about picnics and falling flowers. I suppose it was the service rendered on that occasion which made Hawkins apply to Werner in his perplexity some two months after. Lady Jane, as we called her, would not accept a ring or make an engagement without papa's consent, and Henry's prospects were not of the most brilliant order. Besides, Mr Bellingham professed an objection to parting with his girls, except in due rotation, and beginning with the fifth daughter scarcely accorded with that family statute. But Werner was known to have influence with Mrs Bright. There was no difficulty in asking his counsel, for he had no rival vanities; indeed, the honest fellow had never been known to make the smallest advances to womankind but once, when he was found reciting part of a German play to Lady Jane in a corner of the back-drawing-room, and caught the lively girl laughing at him in the opposite mirror. There was great fun among us concerning that recitation. Werner joined in it after his own wind-dried fashion, remarking, that from the glance he got of himself in the glass, it was no wonder Lady Jane laughed; but the passage was fine, if she had only understood German. Lady Jane got severely scolded by Miss Florence for the impropriety, but it was all over and forgotten before Hawkins's business came on. What advice Werner gave him, I cannot tell, nor what persuasions he brought to bear on the old people; but my cousin emerged from the back-parlour one morning looking as if he had won some hard-fought field. It was afterwards observed that Miss Julia Jane wore a ring on the appointed finger; that her four seniors were out of humour for some time, and Mrs Bright told everybody how ridiculous it was that that child should be engaged. They were to wait three years till Hawkins had a position; but before half the time, they got tired, as anybody would, of being always invited, and set together, quizzed, remarked upon, and made jealous, with the other amenities of engaged life. The Bellinghams were tired, too, and as Hawkins had made his debut in the engraving world by illustrating Lord Petworth's 'Ode to Spring' in the *Literary Diamond*—the plate consisted of a tree, a magpie, and two bunches of duckweed, but Bright said there was execution in it, and his prospects were begun—the young people were allowed to go to church and be made fast with the usual formalities.

I have always remarked, that when a set once gets broken by the migration or settlement of any of its members, the rest soon scatter away, and so it proved with the Bellinghams and their studio. A few years brought many changes to that select circle. Serle

found out that the medical profession was the field for his talents; I discovered, with the help of a mercantile uncle, that business would pay me better than engraving; Werner finished his apprenticeship, and commenced his profession with all sorts of good wishes from his master, who, however, did not expect him, more than ourselves, ever to finish a plate respectably. In the meantime, the day of Annuals was waning; Bright's plates were not paid for as they had been; and as family expenditure could not be diminished, the little man's difficulties increased to such a degree, that relations, friends, and pupils found it necessary to keep at a safe distance from him and his. I believe there were eventually writs and executions issued; but he escaped from them and his fair family by slipping quietly down the valley of the shadow where bailiffs cannot follow, after an attack of bronchitis, about the time that Amulets, Gems, and Caskets were selling for Christmas. Their relatives, and everybody within their reach, had terrible work settling Mrs Bright and her girls. They opened a seminary for young ladies, but it wouldn't do; they went out as governesses, and never kept a situation longer than the first quarter. I can't recollect all the varieties of lady's business in which they did not succeed, but five out of the eight got off by desperate exertions. I understand three of them were considered low matches, and not spoken of by the remaining trio—by the by, Miss Florence was one of them—when they and their mamma were finally established, to the great relief of their friends, in a small boarding-house at Broadstairs.

Before that happy arrangement was concluded, Serle had taken the degree of M.D. at the London University, married an alderman's niece, and bought a practice in Finsbury; I had entered into partnership with Clarke and Sons, and induced the eldest of Clarke's daughters to become Mrs John Robinson; a Mr and Mrs Hawkins were getting deep into the cares of the world, as represented by an uncertain income and an increasing family. Theirs was the most decided love-match of the three, and I believe they got on as well as most married people. It was true, Mrs Bright heard and rehearsed some complaints of Harry's staying too late at the Social Bantams, and Hawkins's mother and sisters thought he might have got a better manager. The days of Lady Jane-ship were over with her; the time of white gloves and attitudes were gone by with him. The promising young man of our studio never attained to his master's place in the esteem of print-publishers—his plates brought in little—Julia Jane was not the best of housekeepers—there were five children in as many years—the pair were getting careworn—and we, together with all their friends, wondered how long their heads would be kept above water. Sometimes I thought it served Lady Jane right for her behaviour at the picnic; sometimes I pitied the poor little woman for having married the poverty-struck artist instead of his well-doing cousin. Mrs John Robinson knew nothing of that; but it was a mighty puzzle to her how christening robes, birthday frocks, and similar contingencies could be got out of Hawkins's earnings, till one evening—I believe it was over gin and water—he let out to me that Julia Jane had an income. 'We don't know exactly how it comes,' said Hawkins. 'Cuttleman and Co. pay her twenty-five pounds every quarter-day, and say they are bound in honour to tell nothing about it; but old Bright had a brother who disgraced the family by going to sea—before the mast, you understand—and never turned up since. That man had a great liking for Julia Jane in her infancy, and she believes the money comes from him; but we think it better not to talk of it; people might make misconstructions; and by all accounts, Uncle Bob, as she calls him, would be no help to a family's gentility.' I promised strict secrecy; and except what Mrs John did to circulate it

among her private friends, the story of Cuttleman and Co.'s transaction was known only to us four who had got acquainted in Bright Bellingham's studio, and kept up the old friendship in spite of our far diverging ways.

I think Carl Werner kept the secret best; perhaps because he was the only bachelor among us. Poor Bright's prophecy, which had so signally failed concerning his son-in-law, proved equally wide of the mark with regard to him. From the time he commenced business on his own account, Carl worked away at the engraving silently and steadily, as he used to do, in the corner of the studio, made no acquaintances, looked after no young ladies; and if he had any amusement except perpetual smoking, an occasional trip to the theatre when there was a strong tragedy on, and a row up or down the Thames with a wherryman whose grandfather had come from Germany, no mortal could guess what it was. He worked, however, and maintained himself without a farthing from his family. The old gentleman in the Baltic trade had not exactly cast him off for taking to plates, but he left Carl to work out his own purpose with great philosophy, and sent to Hamburg for a nephew to fill the place destined for his son in the concern, and probably in his will also. Carl worked on, and in process of time it was discovered that the pupil whose *ne plus ultra* was to be woodcuts, could do line-engraving in first-rate style, could give the best paintings to steel and paper, could form designs of his own which rejoiced the hearts of all who dealt in illustrated books. Carl's reputation rose, and so did his returns; but his mode of life never varied; he lived in two second-floor rooms in Craven Street, Strand, because the landlady understood him, and didn't object to smoke; he wore the same loosely-put-on clothes, always rusty, and never made in the fashion; he came sometimes to see Serle, sometimes to see me, and occasionally asked us to his rooms, where things were wonderfully snug, notwithstanding undisturbed dust, and an atmosphere compounded of it and tobacco. From Hawkins he kept something like distance—we thought for fear of the professional patronage which might be wanted; for Carl was prudent, and understood how to save money. We knew he was laying up in some bank, but never could get the sum or purpose of his savings out of him: only once, when he had been working some years, Carl gave us to understand that the amount was considerable, that he had made his will, and constituted Serle and myself executors.

It was not twelve months after that disclosure, at which we had both laughed and wondered, when Werner was in the midst of a plate which was to fix his fame for ever among the print-publishers, that he went down to Sheerness with his friend the wherryman one rough March day; and how it happened not even the newspapers could tell exactly, but the boat was upset in a squall somewhere off the Medway. The wherryman and two other passengers were picked up by a cutter's boat, but Carl was never seen till some days after, when a bargeman found his body floating out to sea. His father and family took charge of all that concerned the funeral. I believe there was some grief among them in a quiet German way; but Serle and I, being executors, had his will solemnly read by a lawyer from Doctors' Commons, and found that, exclusive of a mourning-ring to each of us, and a trifling legacy to his landlady for understanding him and the smoke, the whole of his savings, amounting to three thousand pounds, which had been gathered out of his plates and designs through hard-working years, and lodged with Cuttleman and Co., were bequeathed to Mrs Henry Hawkins, formerly called Miss Julia Jane Bellingham, in testimony of the friendship and respect entertained for her by her father's pupil. The testament concluded with a strict

injunction to us to keep his drawings, but destroy all the written papers we should find, without allowing them to be seen by any eyes but our own. The drawings, as might be expected, were well worth preserving, for Carl was a born artist, and I have some of them yet; but the written papers consisted entirely of letters in his own hand, and in German; bundle after bundle methodically sealed with his crest; and all addressed to Madame Carl von Werner at half-a-dozen different streets and numbers, where we knew my cousin Hawkins had encamped; the latest being directed to his present residence, Filmore Terrace, Kensington. As executors, we had a right to look into that mystery, and we did it. Letter after letter was opened and read by us both. There was between Serle and me a smattering of German, so we understood enough to see that they were all addressed to his beloved wife, Julia Jane, who was separated from him by what he called the malice of Fate; but they were to meet again at some indefinite time and place; and more loving, true-hearted letters I never saw.

'You see he never sent one of them, and she would not understand a syllable of them if he had. What a strange mode of building his castle in the air,' said Serle. 'I always did think that German play wasn't recited in the corner for nothing.'

'Was he insane, Serle?' said I.

'Perhaps he was on that point, but Carl's insanity was not of a common kind. We had better burn these letters, and say nothing about them.'

The letters were burned before we left the room, and Mr and Mrs Hawkins never knew anything except that she had been left three thousand pounds by Carl Werner's will. Hawkins ever after spoke of him as a noble fellow; but his poor little wife, who had lived and borne up so well through their days of difficulty, sickened and died in the following autumn; and Henry, after doing the inconceivable for thirteen months, married advantageously into the family of a successful engraver, who had thought Carl a rival. He has since become in a manner successful himself; but the whole Bellingham lineage daily denounce him for not having shared Lady Jane's three thousand with them; and Serle and I, when we happen to be alone together—which family-men cannot often be—sometimes talk of those strange letters, and our poor friend the married bachelor.

ANTIQUE GEMS.

It is a common error to confuse Gems with precious stones; whereas gems should signify carved or engraved stones only, such as cameos or intaglios. At the coronation of the present Czar at Moscow, the Countess of Granville, our ambassador's wife, eclipsed the rest of the company—exceedingly rich in jewels though the great Russian families are—by her magnificent ornaments, the triumph of art over mere material wealth. Others were in a blaze of diamonds and 'glimmer of pearls,' but those, however valuable, could, if lost, be replaced; while the English lady's *parure*, composed of eighty-eight gems selected from the best specimens in the Devonshire collection of Greek and Roman art, could never be reproduced. Mere decoration, however, is the lowest use to which these exquisite embodiments of taste and skill can be put. The historian and the antiquary are both indebted to them. They indestructibly preserve for us, although in miniature, the exact representations of the most celebrated works of the ancient sculptors, long since destroyed or lost. 'The Apoxyomenos of Calliades, which was pronounced the "Canon" or model of statuary in bronze, but which, together with almost all the other works in that metal, has perished in the times of barbarism, is allowed by all archaeologists to have been the original of the famous intaglio in the Marlborough cabinet, an athlete

using the strigil, itself also classed amongst the finest engravings known. The Apollo Delphicus, too, supporting his lyre upon the head of a Muse by his side, a subject often reproduced without any variation, and usually in work of the greatest excellence, is incontestably the copy of some very famous and highly revered statue of this deity, then in existence. Again, amongst the Mertens-Schaffhausen gems, the attention is attracted by a singular design, the same god armed with his bow and arrows in his one hand, and with the other holding the fore-feet of a stag standing erect; the whole composition betokening an archaic epoch. There can be small doubt but that this little sard has handed down to us a faithful idea of the bronze group by the early statuary Canachus, which from its singularity was accounted the chief ornament of the Didymion at Athens: an Apollo thus holding a stag, the hind-feet of which were so ingeniously contrived by means of springs and hinges in the toes, that a thread could be passed between them and the base on which they rested, a mechanical *tour de force* thought worthy by Pliny of particular mention.'

Gems supply us with pictures of the usages of domestic life amongst the ancients, giving us authentic details of the forms and construction of innumerable articles used in war, navigation, religious rites, the games of the circus and arena, the representations of the stage, with the costume, masks, and all other accessories of the scenic performance. In a good collection of impressions from ancient gems, the student will see the various pieces of armour of the ancient Greek or Etruscan warrior carefully made out in their minutest details; and the obscure subject of the construction of the ancient trireme has been principally elucidated by the representations thus handed down to our times. The disputed chronology of Egyptian history has been already to some extent, and will doubtless be yet more fully made out by the aid of the numerous scarabei and tablets bearing the names and titles of the kings, whenever a more satisfactory mode of interpreting their hieroglyphical legends, than the present conjectural method, shall have been discovered.

Surely, then, the study of Antique Gems is not to be one despised, or set down in the final category of Genealogy, Heraldry, or the Art of Illumination. It seems, indeed, to be peculiarly fitted for one whose life is passed in lettered ease, and we are much indebted to Mr King, of Trinity College, Cambridge, for his admirable exposition of the matter.* His enthusiasm was, of course, readily laid, like a housemaid's fire, for such a pursuit, and has increased with application, or he could never have set about, and far less completed, so large and interesting a volume out of such materials. A hack writer could not have rendered the subject readable, even if he himself survived the compilation; but with our author it is a labour of love, and he goes about it as though he were composing something in praise of his mistress. He does not believe it to be in the power of Time or Chance to hurt his favourites. 'Once a captain, always a captain,' he applies to all gems, no matter how ancient. He protests that the breastplates worn by the Jewish high-priests—the earliest instance on record of the art of the gem-engraver—are still shining somewhere.

'It will sound incredible to the ear of the uninitiated, but every one conversant with the nature of gems will admit that these most venerable productions of the glyptic art must still be in existence. No lapse of time produces any sensible effect upon these monuments, as is testified by the numerous seals even in a softer material, vitrified clay, bearing the name of Thothmes III., the contemporary of Moses himself. Their

* *Antique Gems.* By the Rev. C. W. King, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. John Murray, Albemarle Street.

intrinsic value also, as the finest gems that could be procured by the zeal of a race trafficking all over the world, must have rendered them objects of care to all the conquerors into whose hands they fell, and though removed from their original vestments, and reset in various ornaments, they must have always ranked amongst the most precious state jewels of the captor of the Holy City. This doubtless was the cause that the breastplate belonging to the first temple is not mentioned in the list of articles sent back by Cyrus to Jerusalem. The breastplate in use after the captivity, and described by Josephus, was carried to Rome, together with the other spoils of the temple. Of the subsequent fate of these treasures, the more probable account is, that they were transferred to Constantinople, and deposited by Justinian in the sacristy of Santa Sophia. Hence, there is a chance of the gems emerging from oblivion at no distant day, when the "Sick Man's" treasury shall be rummaged! What a day of rejoicing both to archaeologists and to the religious world will the identification of one of these sacred monuments occasion; a contingency by no means to be thought chimerical in an age which has witnessed the resuscitation of Sennacherib's signet [of which a woodcut is given], of his drinking-cup, and of his wife's portrait.*

Gems of considerable antiquity are still extant, with legends in the Rabbinical Hebrew character; as also huge gold rings with inscriptions on the shank, used at the celebration of the marriage-ceremony.

Concerning the materials used by the gem-engraver, we find the following interesting particulars. The carnelian, and its superior variety the sard, has the first place, as the stone most commonly used, and the best adapted for the work. The most ancient intaglios, such as the Etruscan and Egyptian, are cut on red carnelians. The sard is a finer variety, tougher, more easily worked, and susceptible of a higher and more enduring polish. The name is derived from Sardis, whence they were first imported into Greece. Chaledony is called white carnelian by our lapidaries. Next to the sards rank the onyx, sardonyx, nicolo, and agate. The sardonyx is a white opaque layer, superimposed upon a red transparent stratum of true red sard. The common onyx has two opaque layers of different colours, usually in strong contrast to each other, as red and white, green and white. The agate is of the same substance as the onyx, but the layers are wavy, and often concentric. The nicolo is an abbreviation of the Italian *onico*, a little onyx.

Jaspers were the *seal-stones*, par excellence, amongst the Romans. Pliny distinguishes several varieties, the best with a purple, the more common with an emerald tinge. The spotted variety, called blood-stone, anciently bore the name of heliotrope, or sun-turner, from the notion that if immersed in water, it reflected an image of the sun as red as blood. Garnets were favourite stones with the Romans, as also the Persians; and from the frequency with which portraits of the Sassanian monarchs appear engraved on this gem, it would seem to have been regarded by the later Persians as a royal stone. The carbuncle, which is a deep red variety, is always cut in 'cabochon.'

That the emerald and ruby should yield to the engraver's skill may seem to the unlearned in these matters somewhat surprising; Mr King, however, mentions some fine examples of both. Perhaps one of the most curious stories ever told about a gem, is one related by Herodotus concerning the emerald signet of Polycrates, the work of Theodorus of Samos. Polycrates was on terms of close friendship with Amasis, king of Egypt, but his power increased so greatly, and he was so uniformly successful in his enterprises, that his friend Amasis wrote to warn him not to incur the jealousy of the gods, but to avert it by casting away voluntarily that thing the loss of which would most pain his soul. Polycrates, having read the letter, and conceiving that Amasis had given him

good advice, began to consider which of his valuables he should most grieve to lose, and this, he decided, was his favourite emerald signet. He accordingly manned a fifty-oar galley, went on board, and ordered it to be put out to sea; and when at a considerable distance from the island, he took off the signet, and cast it into the sea. This done, he returned, and grieved over the loss as a great misfortune. But some six days after, a fisherman having caught an exceedingly fine fish, carries it up to the palace, as a present to Polycrates; when, lo! upon the servants opening the fish, they find in its belly the seal of their master. He, deeming the event superhuman, wrote an account of it to his friend Amasis, who straightway sent a herald to Samos, to renounce the friendship of a man who was thus *over-fortunate*, and alleging as the reason, that if some dreadful calamity at last befel Polycrates, he might not himself be grieved for him as a friend. Mr King mentions a sardonyx shewn in Pliny's time, and pretended to be this famous signet, but he is decided in his belief that the signet was an emerald, and as precious for the work of the artist as its own intrinsic value. Perhaps this stone also will turn up in the ransack of the sultan's treasury.

As another instance of a remarkable emerald intaglio, may be mentioned the one said to have been engraved with the head of the Saviour, by command of the Emperor Tiberius, who desired to see the portrait of so famous a person. Engravings, pretended to be copies of this gem, are not uncommon, and they give a mild but weak expression to the countenance, with a shelving forehead.* Smaragdus, the ancient name of the emerald, is a Greek corruption of the Sanscrit *Smarakata*. Gem-engravers were said to relieve their sight, when wearied by over-exertion, by looking at an emerald, so effectually does its mild green lustre refresh the eye. The hyacinthus was identical with our sapphire. The diamond has never been engraved; in fact, the art of cutting and polishing this gem was only discovered in the fifteenth century by Louis de Berghem, and the first ever cut by him was a large one, weighing fifty-five carats, belonging to Charles the Bold, and now known as the Sancy Diamond. The following is told of a famous sard signet in the Paris collection. 'In the last century, as the Abbé Barthelemy was exhibiting the rarities of the Bibliothèque to a distinguished antiquary of the day, he suddenly missed this ring, whereupon, without expressing his suspicions, he privately despatched a servant for an emetic, which, when brought, he insisted on the antiquary's swallowing then and there. In a few minutes, he had the satisfaction of hearing the signet tinkle in the basin held before the unlucky victim to the love of antiquities.' Polycrates himself could not have been more disconcerted by the return of his gem from the deep, into which, for a very different purpose, he had cast it.

It would appear that nature herself sometimes anticipates and outdoes the skill of the engraver. The agate of King Pyrrhus was said to have been marked naturally so as to represent Apollo holding the lyre, and surrounded by the nine Muses, each with her appropriate attribute. Agates occur at the present day marked with figures which it seems almost impossible to ascribe to a mere freak of nature. Amongst those in the British Museum is one representing the head of Chancer covered with the hood, as in his well-known portrait, the resemblance of which is most extraordinary; and yet the pebble is evidently in its original state, not even polished, but merely broken in two. But in most of these 'nature-paintings,' the natural veins and shadings of the stone have been probably much assisted by the imagination of the beholder.

If nature, however, imitates art, art has not been

* Intaglios representing purely Christian subjects are of the rarest possible occurrence in works of real antiquity.

slow in repaying the polite attention. It is almost impossible for any one not 'a scholar and a gentleman,' as well as a lapidary and a man of taste, to tell whether the thing offered to him as an antique gem is genuine or not. The devices used to entrap, not the unwary, but the most sagacious, are well-nigh numberless. Beside the execution of the gems, which is at least as difficult a thing to estimate as that of a painting, the precious stones themselves have from very early times been imitated. Crystal, heated and plunged into a tincture of cochineal, becomes a ruby, and into a mixture of turnsole and saffron, a sapphire; while the carbuncle of ancient times, as of to-day, was made out of the same comparatively cheap substance. The crystal being cut to the proper form, its back is painted the required colour, and then it is set in a piece of jewellery. To baffle this, in the case of the chrysolithus, Pliny expressly mentions that the stone was set open. 'Although the Roman jewellers made false jaspers of three colours by cementing as many slices of different stones together, and hence its name *Tercanthus*, they do not seem to have been acquainted with doublets, the favourite device of the modern trade, by which a thin slice of real stone is backed by a faceted crystal, and then so set as to conceal the junction. The ancient frauds in coloured stones were entirely confined to the substitution of pastes for the true, to detect which Pliny lays down many rules—some fanciful enough, but containing one that is infallible, that by means of a splinter of obsidian, a paste may be scratched, but not a real stone.' After such ingenious frauds as these, the Cingalese, who cut such very fine emeralds out of the thick bottoms of our wine-bottles, to sell to the 'steamboat gentlemen,' may be considered to be quite unsophisticated; as also the Brighton lapidaries, who cast old glass fragments into the sea, which the attrition of the shingle soon converts into the form of real pebbles. 'These tradesmen,' as Mr King wittily observes, 'do literally cast their bread into the water, and find it again after many days.' We rather suspect that the eye is not greatly refreshed by the contemplation of the Brighton emeralds, and that even 'if engraved with the figure of a beetle,' they would not be very 'advantageous to persons having suits to monarchs,' as Pliny says the magicians of his time declared emeralds to be. The amethyst, as its name implies, was supposed to prevent intoxication, and was therefore invaluable set in a ring, and worn at supper-parties. The ruby, being powdered, and taken in water, was a certain though expensive cure for liver complaints, as well as a most trustworthy lightning-conductor. The chrysolite, bored through, and strung on an ass's hair, was capital for expelling devils. But the amber had the most excellent though dangerous qualities, for if laid upon your wife when she was asleep, she would confess to certain peccadillos, which it was not likely you would have otherwise got out of her.

Mr King tells us that the Egyptian scarabei, or 'beetle-stones,' are the earliest monuments of the glyptic art in existence. The beetles are cut out of basalt, carnelian, agate, lapis-lazuli, and other hard stones, but are as frequently made of a soft limestone, or of a vitrified clay, the harder stones appearing to have been filed into shape by means of a piece of emery. The softer substances were probably fashioned into the beetles, and then engraved with a splinter of flint; for Herodotus speaks of the Ethiopian arrows being headed with the stone by means of which they engrave their signets. The earliest method of wearing them was that of simply stringing them intermixed with other beads, as a necklace, the engraved base of the scarab serving at the same time the purpose of a signet. The Assyrian and Persian cylinders were similarly pierced with a large hole passing through their length, for a string, and in this

manner worn round the wrist as a bracelet. The discovery of the process of cutting intaglios on the harder gems is due to the Assyrians.

Concerning the signets mentioned in the Old Testament, Mr King observes that 'it is always as being borne on the hand, and never on the finger. Thus, Tamar demands the seal and twisted cord (chotam and pethil), usually rendered "ring," "signet," or "bracelet:" again, Pharaoh takes the signet off his own hand, and puts it upon that of Joseph: thus, also, the expression, "the signet upon my right hand:" thus, too, the young Amalekite brings to David, as the ensigns of royalty, the diadem and the bracelet taken from the corpse of Saul, apparently because the latter contained the royal signet. Pliny also expressly asserts that the use of finger-rings was of no very great antiquity. A curious kind of natural signet was used by the Athenians of the time of Aristophanes, the invention of which he jocosely ascribes to the subtle genius of the misogynist Euripides. As it was found that the wives were able to get themselves a fac-simile of their husbands' signet for half a drachma, and thus to open, without fear of detection, all the stores sealed up by their lords, Euripides had taught the latter to seal the wax or clay securing the doors with bits of *worm-eaten wood*. The curious windings and intricate curves traced on the surface of the wood by the "fairies' coach-maker," were quite beyond imitation, and supplied a signet that could not be counterfeited.'

With that hint to husbands, we must leave this volume of Mr King's, who has skillfully contrived to popularise, without degrading, a subject not only 'caviare to the multitude' (which is but little to say when caviare can be got in Piccadilly for a shilling per pot), but one especially dull and unattractive to their eyes.

POND-FISHING.

YOUR grand salmon-killers turn up their noses at us, but we don't care. Look at those little boys coming home in full chatter after a half-holiday's catching sticklebacks. Most of their game, it is true, died, from having been handed about too long for inspection—they have got one alive in a physis bottle, poor little beast! as much perplexed as a mermaid would be in a water-butt—but its captors are happy as Scrope when he shot his biggest stag. Don't those boys recall your days of triumph when you caught sticklebacks?—when you took a worm, tied him round the waist with a thread, and let him down into the middle of a shoal? Didn't they bite, one at each end? It was not so much a bite, though, as a shameless gobble. Often the worm, excusably enough, threw them off when they had got half an inch of him stowed away inside; but your stickleback is a bold feeder, and soon gets over a check. One at each end, the rest fussing about, and trying to help, the two lucky fellows persevere, and swallow on till their noses meet in the midst; then you gently lift them out, and draw them off their dinners, the worm doing the same service over and over again, till he grows limp and white.

From these early essays, to the finished diplomacy employed with shy, heavy carp, Pond-fishing has held its own as the favourite pursuit of thousands. Look at the floats in the tackle-shops, where a varnished pike swims in mid air, like Mohammed's coffin between heaven and earth. Look at the floats I say—fat, tapering, transparent. Do not they recall pleasant visions of the days you spent by the weedy moat, where the water-hen crept under the hollow

bank, and the dragon-fly sat upon the bulrush; of the dark hole beneath the willow, where the conscious cork made circles in the still water, and then sailed sideways off, or sank with unequivocal decision? Talk of the small skill needed in this humble sport. I should like to see a deer-stalker catch moles. No, no! We grant you all the respect you ask, ye fly-fishers; but do not suppose every tench caught with a float is a fool, or that it is easy to fix a hook in his leather jaws, because you hide it with a worm instead of a hackle. In the first place, worms are not all alike; and if you will listen for a minute, I will tell you how best to provide this first essential in pond-fishing. Take a spade, you suppose. No such thing. Wait for a clear dewy night, and then, provided with a candle and a pot of moss, step quietly on to the lawn; there, as you hold the flame low down, you will see the subterranean population of the soil taking the air. With the tip of his tail left inside his door, Mr Worm stretches himself out at full length in the cool wet grass. Some, you see, are large, coarse, and dark; let them lie; they might be of use, if you wanted to catch eels, but to other fish they offer small temptation. Look again: there is a superior animal, made altogether of finer clay, and quickened with purer blood. Notice his form—head elongated, tail flat, colour pinky, with a dark line running down his back. Pick him up; he is the right sort. Yes, I thought so. You laid hold of his head, and he slipped through your fingers quick as thought, back into his hole. No—press his tail first just where it dips into the ground; then gently taking him by the body, he will lose his presence of mind and gripe of his threshold at the same time, and come up easily enough. There; put him in the moss, and go on. Thus hundreds may be taken. But mind you don't stomp about like Rumpole Stilkskin, or you will jar the ground, and frighten the worms back into their holes before they can be touched.

To-morrow we will try for some tench.

Which way is the wind? East. Then you might as well fish with a bare boot-hook, for not a fin will you touch. No, not east—south-west. Ah, well! then we will try; but I fear the sky is too bright, even though the wind is in the right quarter. What I like to see is a soft gray underflight of clouds slipping slowly along; or a warm rain; or a mass piling up ammunition for a thunder-storm, while the horses stand head to tail beneath the chestnuts, with mutual civility, whisking off the flies, and pounding the dusty grass. No; the day will be too bright—the sun reigns; the hot shimmer rises from the heated soil, making the hedges tremble, as though quivering with wind; the mown hayfield is slippery beneath the soles of your shoes, and the grasshoppers raise their strident chorus as you brush them up with your feet. No fishing to-day—we will look over the tackle, and try in the evening.

What line have you got? Ah! it is as well we didn't start at present. Just add three or four more lengths of gut; and, please observe, don't try to tie them together when they are dry, or they will crack. Put them into your mouth, if you have no water handy. See how I manage it. Now that the gut is soft and limp, I tie the end of one piece simply on to the other, in a common knot; then I tie the end of the second piece on to the first in the same manner; then I pull the two free ends till the knots slip along and catch against each other. Fastened in this way, gut will neither fray nor part.

Now for the rod! Yes, that will do—long, light, stiff in the hand, supple at the point, with rings not hanging loose, but fixed, and large enough to let, if need be, a kink in the line pass through. In the evening, we will try our luck.

What shall we do meanwhile, do you say? Ground-bait! O no; not for tench; nor often, indeed, for any fish. I remember a friend of mine who was

promised a day's sport in a piece of ornamental water. He threw in store of bread and clay, mingled in orthodox proportion; and coming the next morning to the spot with rod, gaff, and creel, found a dozen ducks with their ends up, full of glee and his ground-bait. If you like, you may take my casting-net down to the mill, and try for a few of those dace: we want some bait for Jack.

Now it is past six o'clock, and we must be off. See, the horses have left the shade, and the cows are licking up the cool grass in the middle of the meadow. It is feeding-time, and the tench will be sharp set.

Here is the pond, an old clay-pit, with crumbling sides, and clear spots among the weeds, shewing where the water is the deepest—just the place for tench. Now, then; put your rod together, and leave a good length of gut beneath the float. Bait with one of those clear-complexioned worms you found upon the grass-plot. Yes, put a big one on—*parvum parva decet*—and with shortened line, lower him gently by that patch of weeds. There let the float rest, and do not be in a hurry to strike when you see it move.

Bustling men, who cannot work and wait, may sneer if they will at the silent patience of the angler; what know they of the still charm which creeps over the senses, helping them to take in with half-unconscious appetite the blessed influence of evening, when the coolness of the earth meets the sinking fire of the sunbeam, and sends an equal pulse of life through every blade and leaf. Then the watcher who stands beside the pool receives into his being that calm which marks the brethren of his craft. He is angling, it is true; he speculates on the incision of the fish, which—maybe even now deep in the cool water—are circling with suspicious hunger round his bait, loath to swallow, still more loath to leave, the luscious worm. Yet, meanwhile, he gathers in, through open senses, store of nature's truth; he sees and marks, with tenacious observation, countless traits of life—the persevering industry of the insect, the sociable intelligence of the bird, the short history of the summer plant, the steady progress of the growing tree, the shifting architecture of the clouds, the ceaseless machinery of all around that dies to live and lives to die in perpetual succession. But, look! there is a bite. See, the float is uneasy—makes little rings in the water. Now it moves slowly off—now it dips a quarter of an inch—now it rises up, and lies upon its side: that is sure symptom of a tench. Draw in your slack line, lest you hit your rod against that overhanging branch. Now, strike! Yes, you have him; he is a fine fellow too. See how he rolls the water up with his tail, like the blade of a revolving screw; down again, head first! Give him play, but by all means keep him in the midst of that clear spot. Ah! he is yielding to thee, to him, mysterious power from above. Another last dive, and then he can barely keep his head below the surface. Be quick, but gentle, with the landing-net; tow him within its open mouth. There; he is safe—at least in our view of his position. No, poor fellow, that muscular curving of your strong back is of no use to you in the new element to which you are transferred; your slimy life among the weeds is over now; you have swallowed your last thoughtful, and must play an altogether passive part throughout your next appearance at a feast. Tench are best plain boiled; carp are only vehicles for sauce. I remember once, when the evenings were warm, catching a number of tench long after sunset. Every fish in the pond was awake; you could hear them 'kissing,' for the tench makes a small smacking noise with his coy little mouth, just like that of a neat kiss—you could hear them kissing in the weeds by the dozen together. It was too dark to distinguish the float, so I shortened my line, let the bait hang about a foot beneath the surface, and landed a good basketful.

Though tench generally need careful fishing, they

will sometimes bite in scenes of considerable publicity. When a lad, I used to go every year along with a large party, all boys, old and young, to a big pond about twelve miles off, which was crowded with small perch. We fished from a boat, that held about a score of us. O silent shade of Izaak Walton! the craft, when equipped, was a perfect scare-fish, combining every appearance and movement most likely to terrify the game. What with the rocking of the boat—the scrambling over the seats—the shouting and signalling to those on shore—the incessant splashing of fat floats, red, yellow, blue—and occasional recovery of the upper half of a rod flung bodily into the water—the paddling with our hands over the side, and the throwing in of scraps of sandwich-paper and empty bottles, the thing kept up as much disturbance as an eight-oar in a fit.

But still, if the weather proved very soft and propitious, we used to catch a number of eager little perch; and now and then, strange to say, a biggish tench. On those memorable occasions, all the rest took in their rods, and let the fortunate prize-holder play his fish; but, directly he was landed, or boated, in went the nineteen floats over the lucky spot at which he had been hooked. I need not say we never caught two running.

The carp is the shyest of all pond-fish, and requires both fine tackle and careful approach. Strange as it may seem, even in places where they are accustomed to human society—as in a moat around a farmhouse—they distinguish and suspect the angler. He must not only fish for them very early in the morning, but conceal himself while he does so. Creep up behind a bush; then with a short line and unobtrusive float, run your rod quietly out over the bank, and lower your bait without disturbance. There; your hook is neatly covered with a lump of tough, well-kneaded paste, and you have stuck a fresh gentle on its point. The float stands motionless up, reflected double, without any slack line hanging in the water.

It is a June morning, and very early, for the distant church-clock has just struck three. Man is asleep, breathing the loaded air of close chambers, his grimy chin and tumbled hair sunk deep in the suffocating pillow. Meanwhile, nature is awake; while you crouch behind your ambush on the moat's bank, or stand like a rifleman behind that pollard willow, you hear the lark singing as he mounts to meet the sun. See, there is a thrush with a snail in his bill; he is looking for a stone on which to crack his breakfast. Ah, that will suit! How he whacks the shell upon it! pausing every now and then to catch a tighter grip of its writhing inmate. Miserable snail!—your armour will soon be all chipped off, and you will have to slide, naked, down your captor's throat. Any one can find many of these sacrificial spots at the edge of a coppice where thrushes abound, shining as if smeared with gum, but with numerous fragments of snail-shell littered about, and bearing witness to the nature of the varnish with which the stone is covered. Look, too, at the ants—hurrying about with lots of baggage, like railway-porters five minutes before the express starts: how those *paupe* manage to survive such apparently rough and incessant shifting, always surprises me. Look, too, at the swallows and martins, breakfasting off the meadow, shaving the grass tops, and whipping up a mouthful at a time, thirty miles an hour. The rooks, now—I always feel an especial respect for them, they have so much of the good old-fashioned country-gentleman air about them—see what a pleasant conversational meal they are making meanwhile in that soft, newly ploughed field. But we must be looking after our carp. Ah! I thought we had provided the right victual even for those dainty aristocratic palates, and they have not found us out, not yet at least. Keep low behind the bush—watch your float—see how steadily it sweeps off—how steadily it dives. Yes, a fine fish I declare.

Bait again; you will have another before the homestead turns out, and the yardman stumps up to see, but spoil your sport. Put up your rod; shoulder your fish; and when you get home, and join the lazy sleepers, who by this time have shaved, and come down smug and brisk, 'perhaps you won't' breakfast yourself, as young Bailey says in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 'perhaps not; O no.'

TWO DAYS AT CANTON.

LAST Thursday, May 30, Captain K—and I set off precisely at 8-A.M. from Hong-kong port for Canton. The steamer by which we were conveyed was three stories high, and very comfortably fitted up. We had a long passage for so good a boat, not reaching Canton till 8 P.M., though the distance from Hong-kong is but 100 miles; but we had a tide of seven knots an hour against us all the way. I can say nothing of scenery, as we had rain and fog all day.

As we came to anchor, the rush of boats alongside was dreadful: they smashed and crashed each other horribly, and being managed by women, the shouting and talking were *not a little*, in a language strange and unmusical. Every boat had its lantern waving about on the end of a long pole. They are the best river-boats I have ever seen, beautifully kept, each having its little joss-house or temple, sitting-room, and kitchen. The Chinese are very fond of pictures—every boat is full of them. In the boat I was in, I was struck by seeing one of the battle of Waterloo, and next to it another of the siege of Rangoon. The boat-women dress very neatly, and get up their long black hair in a wonderful and elaborate manner. In these boats, there is a small place in front for two rowers, and a place behind for a person to scull and steer with a long oar; even the largest junks use these, which are worked by a number of men. The boat-population of Canton—of persons who *live entirely* on the river—is estimated at 100,000; the population of the town itself at 2,000,000.

We soon reached our destination—the house of a Mr Scott, a merchant, a very kind and hospitable gentleman. Here we were so fortunate as to meet the Rev. Mr Gray, who has resided ten years in China, and devoted all his energies to the study of the language of the Chinese, their manners, laws, and religion. This gentleman—a most delightful companion—very kindly offered to be our guide through Canton. He first called our attention to the lodging-house boats on the river, in which Chinese travellers stop, for the boat-population is quite distinct from that of the land, and has very little to do with it. We walked through the ruins of what had once been English factories, but destroyed by the Chinese in 1856; they were in the outer town, a place of vast extent, but not called 'the city,' being outside the walls of Canton, inside whereof, a few years ago, no European was admitted; but which is now polluted by the presence of every sort of western barbarian, or the Red-handed race, as the Chinese call them. We visited the temple called *Pai-ti-musinun*; the deities there are a snake and six turtles. We had only the honour of seeing the god's skin, which he had just cast. This serpent is supposed by the people to be the evil spirit; as such, they pray to it, and make it offerings of eggs and birds. In the gardens was a tree, in which were placed two figures, a man and woman, said to represent the first created human beings. The six turtles were placed in a tank, and

also worshipped as evil spirits. We enjoyed the interesting sight of seeing them fed. A tablet in this temple contained an inscription, which the Rev. Mr Gray translated for us nearly as follows: 'Two cousins had a dispute about a large property, which was settled in favour of him whose claim was unjust by the mandarin of the district, bribery and corruption having been used. The unsuccessful cousin, knowing this, went to Peking to petition the emperor; he sounded the petitioner's trumpet, which always hangs at the gate of the palace, and was admitted, having first received a certain rank, without which no one can enter the emperor's presence. He looked on him with a favourable eye, restored to him his property, cutting off the heads of both cousin and mandarin. The petitioner, on returning to his native city of Canton, erected this tablet to commemorate the justice and virtue of the emperor.'

The streets of Canton are all very narrow; and when you stand at one end, and look down, you see nothing but a vista of Chinese signboards, which they hang end-ways down each side of the shop. We went through the dog-and-cat market, where they are first fattened, like fowl with us, and then dressed in various ways. Mr Gray pointed to a very nice-looking skinned animal which was for sale in a shop, and said to me: 'What is that?' I replied at once: 'A young pig.' He pointed to the feet; then I saw it was a dog! In the same shop, they were pounding up a mixture of cat and dog into a sort of pudding. As for frogs and rats, they were as common as possible; but the shops and articles of food were so clean and nice-looking, I think I could have eaten anything I saw.

After following Mr Gray at a quick trot through the narrow streets, the Chinese taking very little notice of us, except to salute with a frequent 'Chin, Chin,' we turned into a gambling-house, which was full of Chinese playing in a most eager manner for great piles of *cash*, which, curious to say, is the only coin known in China, being a square piece of brass with a hole in the centre, by which they are strung. The Chinese are dreadful gamblers, particularly the ladies. They manage by sending their servant to a gambling-house for a paper, on which is marked a number of figures. Having first asked the direction of some favourite deity, the lady selects and marks off a certain number of those figures. The owner of the gambling-house has followed the same plan with a precisely similar card. The next day, the lady sends in her card: if the figures marked off correspond, the lady loses; and for every figure which does not, she receives a certain amount.

The Chinese bring their religion into everything they do, never undertaking anything without first invoking the direction of some god.

We visited the private house of one of the greatest men in Canton, Howqua by name—with whose famous 'Mixture' every English reader is acquainted. We did not see the great man, but were introduced to his son, and had the pleasure of taking tea with him in very small china cups. The room in which we were was not unlike an English-room, with tables and chairs, and Chinese pictures on the walls. We were shewn round an extremely pretty garden; a bridge thrown over some water looked the original of that on the old willow-pattern plate. The house was very large, and built, like all Chinese houses, with that peculiar roof you know so well. A gentleman's house in China is always of great size, for when a son marries, he is expected to live with his father for at least five years afterwards.

We were introduced to the tutor and painter of the family, for Howqua kept him chiefly to paint for the amusement of the ladies. When we saw him he was painting exquisitely beautiful flowers. On taking

leave we said 'Chin, Chin,' and our host 'Good-by,' which was the whole extent of our Chinese and of his English.

We then visited what was indeed a contrast, a large open space called the Beggars' Square. It is a refuge for all those who are destitute and sick, where they receive every morning medical attendance. It is the only attempt at a hospital in Canton.

We called at a government public school, but it was not school-hour, so we only saw a few young fellows, who looked at us with astonishment. The principal room was a large hall, with rough tables and benches, and the professor's chair at the top. In the adjoining college we were introduced to the most learned man in Canton. Mr Gray had some conversation with him; but as for us, we could only look on and say the usual 'Chin, Chin.' Leaving this learned gentleman, we looked in at the Tea Guilders' Hall, said to be the prettiest building in China. It is a favourite place for theatricals, of which the Chinese are very fond, and call them 'sing-song.'

We next paid our respects to a great Chinese doctor, the 'Sir Philip Crampton' of Canton. The entire front of his house was covered with testimonials which he had received for great cures he had effected; so also were the walls of the room in which he received us. I forgot his name; but he was a fat, pleasant-looking old fellow; with a remarkably fine pig-tail, and very long nails. When he heard I belonged to his profession, he paid me great respect, and took my hand, holding it in a most affectionate manner. Our visit, I am sorry to say, was a very hurried one, as we had no time to spare; but I believe we saw more in that one day—thanks to Mr Gray—than many have seen in weeks.

Next day, we renewed our inspection of Canton, and paid our respects to a lady-abbess; for the Chinese have institutions very like convents, in which young ladies devote themselves to religion and a single life. Near this, we entered a house where they were mourning for the dead. Everything was covered with black—pictures, furniture, &c.; and numerous lights were burning round the body, so as to remind me of an Irish wake. The relatives change their dresses of silk for garments of a very coarse material, which is a token of mourning. They have a curious practice of dressing up the dying person in his most gorgeous apparel, so that few Chinese die in peace, for as soon as they imagine he is near his end, they make a rush to get on his finest clothes before he dies; in fact, the poor patient often dies in the act. In this way, many a man's life is shortened, who, if left to himself, might have even recovered.

We entered an eating-house, which seemed conducted very much like one of those in the Strand, and quite as clean, the only difference being the use of chop-sticks, of which I bought a pair. Close beside it was a tea-house, and the scene which met my eyes was deeply interesting. We entered a very long room, beautifully got up in green and gold carved work. Down each side of this room was a row of small tables, at which were seated a couple of hundred Chinese, partaking of tea and cake. The first thing that struck me was that they were all *poor* men; and next, the little noise and good order of everything—the waiters, indeed, were running about receiving payment, and there was a buzz of many voices, but no loud tones or angry words; and as I stood and looked at this strange scene, I thought, what a contrast it afforded to the gin-palace of our large cities! For ten cash, which is about three-halfpence, the Chinese get as much as they can eat and drink.

We visited some cooking establishments, and anything cleaner or nicer I never saw.

We then went to the Temple of Disconsolate Women, which is devoted to all females unhappy from any cause; and, as you may suppose, it is much frequented, for the Chinese, like the Turks, may have

as many wives as they please. If a woman wishes to curse another, she comes here with a figure cut in paper to represent her enemy, and attaches it to the altar with the head turned down, and one of these I took the liberty of bringing away with me, by which, I suppose, I broke the curse.

Leaving this temple, we passed through a live cat-and-dog market, where they were fattening before sending them to the butchers. This brought us to the temple of the Two Hundred Worthies. It is a mistake to call them gods; they are only statues of men who have distinguished themselves in the empire. After death, they have been made saints, as it were, and as such, are prayed to by the people. This is a most interesting place; but it would have taken more time than we could give to examine each statue; so, passing through the jaid stone-market, from which is made all sorts of beautiful and very valuable ornaments (it is a lovely green colour), and through a coffin-makers' street, we came to the Temple of Longevity, or Noah's Temple, as Mr Gray called it. To us, this is one of the most interesting temples in China, proving that the Chinese recognised there having once been a flood which covered the entire earth; and their account is almost the same as ours. In this temple is the representation of the man, of his three sons, and their three wives, who were saved from the flood. The statue of Noah is a huge thing. Placed behind, are three figures, said to represent the Great God of Heaven. One of the sons of Noah is represented with red hair and beard, and is said by the Chinese to be the father of the red-handed Westerns. In part of the same temple are three huge figures, which represent Time Past, Present, and Future; the attitudes are very good. We also saw the Temple of Eternal Felicity, which was not very striking, except for its beautiful marble pagoda.

All this was *outside* the regular city of Canton. We now entered the city by the western gate, which, before 1856, no barbarian had ever passed through, or if he *did* enter the city, never came out alive.

We soon came to the great pagoda of Canton, nine stories high, and each story twenty feet—a wonderful structure, said to be seventeen hundred years old. It was predicted at the time of its building, that whenever the top fell in, some great misfortune would befall the city. In August 1856, the top fell in, and in September, the English were in possession of Canton. We next passed through the Tartar general's yeman or palace, which is now a French barrack; this brought us to the Bottle Pagoda, which reminded me of one of the round towers of Ireland. Near this was the great temple of Confucius, which contains the only image of this great man in China. This temple bears marks of the bombardment of Canton, and one cannon-ball is lodged right at the feet of Confucius.

The temples are all very similar, being built of wood and stone, in some cases, handsomely carved. There is one called the Temple of the Five Genii, of which Mr Gray told us the following tradition: Some five hundred years ago, five genii, in the form of five rams, entered the city of Canton, and said: 'Peace and plenty be to this city.' No sooner had they said this, than they turned into five stones, for which this temple was built, and which five stones I saw. They are held in great veneration by the Chinese. Here also in a rock is shewn the impression of Confucius's foot, and a very stout gentleman he must have been to have left such a mark.

We finished our day by visiting an old Chinese general, the court-house, and prison. In the court-house, we saw two mandarins about to have sentence executed on some unfortunate beings. When they saw us, they chin-chinned, and sent away the prisoners and the instruments of torture.

We walked through the prison—a most wretched

place. Some prisoners were chained to large stones; others had huge boards round their necks, which hindered them from resting in any position, and this some of them had worn for months. Many had their legs and arms broken and distorted with the application of torture. Here we saw the mother of the great rebel Tie-ping-wanna.

The next day, we rose at 5 A.M., and walked all round the top of the wall of Canton, which is seven miles long. After breakfast, we went with Mr Gray into the suburbs to see the country-house of a Chinese gentleman, and near it, one of the finest temples in China. The same evening, we took leave of our hospitable friend, and steamed down the river to Hong-kong. The evening was beautiful, and I never enjoyed anything more than that excursion.

SPRING.

Sux comes, she comes, o'er hill and meadow-land,
Green leaves and blossoms garlanding her way—
She comes, she comes; blessings on every hand,
Life where her footsteps stray.

We have not known her coming, but the Earth
Through all her pulses feels a quick'ning thrill,
And hears afar the rustling wings of birds,
Beyond her sea-girt hill.

And up and up, o'er all the awak'ning land,
Rise the pale blossoms—handmaids of the Spring,
In their fair morning beauty, 'neath the calm,
Wide shelter of her wing.

And hushed the wail that o'er the startled land,
From her vexed shores, the storms of Winter bore:
Peace to the troubled hearts whose loved and lost
With Spring return no more.

For He who sends her bids the world rejoice;
The multitude of islands shout afar;
Gives to the day the covenant of the skies;
To night, its evening-star.

'Let all the earth rejoice!' The freshened air
Thrills with the burden of each new delight,
Grows day by day each budding scene more fair,
Each day the sky more bright.

Soon shall the Earth, beneath her glowing smile,
Flush into fairest beauty, and the days,
With all the promise of their morn fulfilled,
Be one long noon of praise—

Praise on the hills, from whence the glimmering
streams
Wind to the woodlands, where the violets blow—
Praise in the valleys, where the breezes gay
Soft o'er our gardens blow.

X.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—It is requested that all Contributions to *Chambers's Journal* may be, for the future, directed to the Editor, at 47 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

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